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Canada and the Empire: Address by G. M. Sproat, Agent. Gen. for B. C.

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ANADA AND THE EMPIRE:

A SPEECH

BY

GILBERT MALCOLM SPROAT,

AGENT-GENERAL FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA.

"And that true North, whereof we lately heard
A strain to shame us: 'Keep you to yourselves;
So loyal is too costly! friends—your love
Is but a burthen: loose the bond, and go.'
Is this the tone of empire? * *
* * * * * *
* * * The loyal to their crown
Are loyal to their own far sons, who love
Our ocean-empire with her boundless homes
For ever-broadening England."

TENNYSON *on Canada.*

LONDON:
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I EXPRESS, in this Speech, what is believed to be the general opinion of especially the younger political men, in all the provinces of Canada, upon the subject of the relations of the Dominion to the home portions of the Empire.

G. M. S.

PROPOSAL:

THAT GREAT BRITAIN and IRELAND should form an incorporating Union with CANADA—as ENGLAND formerly united herself with SCOTLAND; and that the political system approved by the English Parliament in 1867 for CANADA, and now successfully working there, should be adopted in the home portions of the Empire, that is to say, in ENGLAND, IRELAND, SCOTLAND and CANADA.

CANADA AND THE EMPIRE.

SYNOPSIS.

THE proposal would add to the importance and dignity of the Crown and the British Legislature—differs from Home Rule and Federation proposals. My proposal is to form an incorporating union with Canada and to adopt the political system, approved by England for Canada, in the home portions of the Empire, which will then be composed of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Canada.

Reasons why action is at this time necessary. Love of the old country, though genuine and strong, must in time wear out without well-sustained intercourse, recognition, and esteem, and without the expectation of continuity. This general truth will be true of Canada and of all our great colonies. The real "Colonial question," or rather "Colonial grievance," is discontent with a merely municipal position.

Again, think of the altered means of national destruction in modern days. Nations fight for existence, and the fight neither looms long nor lasts long. The natural addition to our strength is in our great dependencies.

Further—consider the national convenience and relief likely to result from freeing the British Parliament from non-imperial legislation.

Additionally—reflect upon the probable effects of quickened communication and locomotion in modern days.

The general value of the proposal from a mercantile point of view, and to a great Asiatic-European power like England.

Canada is not too distant for closer political union.

My proposal is limited to Canada. The present position resembles that of England when union with Scotland was found to be essential; only, in place of the England of that time, we now have to put Great Britain and Ireland, and in place of the Scotland of that time we have to put Canada.

The union of England and Scotland is a good precedent for our guidance. So also is the formation of the Dominion of Canada. Let us build upon these precedents.

Statement of the proceedings in the case of union between England and Scotland, and also, more recently, in the case of forming the Dominion of Canada.

The Fiscal question discussed. The existing national debt of Great Britain and Ireland. The existing public debt of the Dominion of Canada. Adjustment of the public debts of colonies which were incorporated as the Dominion of Canada. Future position of Great Britain, Ireland, and Canada, as to Imperial Debts and Revenues.

Matter of fact and tangible good effects of this proposal from a business point of view; great future expansion of business benefiting both England and Canada. Anticipated objections by some Canadian manufacturers. Canadian trade and manufactures must not be extinguished.

Gathering of Imperial strength and power. The strong man armed keeps his goods in peace. We should be both strong and armed. Military and naval resources of Canada.

The Canadian political constitution. Succinct account of its principles and working. Radical difference from that of the United States. Its thoroughly British character. The Canadian political constitution seems to be, in fact, the natural development of the British.

Canadian opinion as to the House of Lords.

Formidable difficulties which delayed the union of England and Scotland do not exist as between Great Britain, Ireland, and Canada. The questions will be questions of detail.

Picture of a vastly extensive Empire, with preponderating moral influences. There is in this world something worth esteeming and seeking for besides wealth and power.

Further remarks as to the effect of the proposal on the dignity and influence of the Crown, on the position which would be opened up to our nobility, landed gentry, and wealthy classes generally, and on the two great Houses of the British Imperial Parliament. Matters under the control of that Parliament.

General position and duties of the provincial Parliaments; would be great legislative assemblies and not merely large vestries; would afford scope for useful and valuable talent which now smoulders away unemployed. These Parliaments being truly representative assemblies, the sphere of the Executive might, in the provinces, be beneficially enlarged in some respects.

More general interest in public affairs on the part of the public would be aroused; the decay of concern for everything out of the private circle of life would be stopped; men would see they had common interests. All this would be valuable in itself, and might be expected to lead to better information on our foreign relations. If facts on each side were known and fairly appreciated, how favourably would international depreciation often be toned down; how greatly would dangerous international quarrels often be lessened?

Temperate and sound advocacy will secure for the whole proposal judicious, unprejudiced hearing on the part of the nation.

SPEECH.

THE subject to which I have the honour of inviting your attention this evening is one so vastly comprehensive and so vastly important, that the especial heads under which I will bring it before you may, at first sight, seem to demand distinct and separate treatment to embrace even an entrance upon the gigantic proportions of the subject of each particular head.

But, having regard to my present purpose, you will, I hope, find that the form which I have adopted is really suitable. It has long been an object of mine to promote inquiry into the possibility of closer political connection between certain already integral parts of the empire, so that all the partially unnoticed but ever-working favourable influences of consanguinity, nationality, intercourse, and connection, might have freer scope in our national life. At present I advocate a measure which will give, I believe, as far as it extends, increased cohesion and a higher organisation to the nation. I will not attempt any exhaustive analysis of the immense number of details involved in the proposal—important and even essential as each of these details may in itself be in actual operation. I will rather endeavour to show that many accompaniments of such a proposal have in this country become not only desirable, but indeed almost necessary, and that the proposal itself which I have to make, when applied, as may be found feasible and convenient, promises results co-extensively happy with its more or less complete adoption.

In the first place, I should like to say, that in dealing with my subject I will try to have regard to men as we find them on both sides of the Atlantic. An exclusive school of what I may call theoretical thinkers may have brought their minds to exclude from their theories of government all regard, or at least due regard, for feelings, habits, opinions, and even prejudices, of the populations for whom they would legislate. Such persons are not guides whom we can follow in the present matter. I cannot consider that man a great thinker who, having to provide for an instrument containing many and complex springs and works, provides for one only of them.

Man is not only intellectual—he is moral, social, physical. The cut-and-dried intellectual skeleton of such philosophy is not my model, nor the model of those who act with me. We endeavour to deal with men such as they are; and we account, accordingly, as principles those motives, feelings, aspirations, opinions, and even prejudices, which we find to be main levers in the movements and changes of the great communities of the earth.

I am deeply sensible that it is difficult to deal with the subject which

I have in hand, before an English audience, without urging views that to many will be new, startling, and perhaps at first unwelcome; but I beg to assure you of one thing at the outset, namely, that my proposal will embrace nothing that really and justly dims, or is calculated to dim, the very brightest lustre of our well-deserved respect and affection for the British Crown, which is the visible headship of all the national possibilities of our race in this world. On the contrary, the due working of such a system as that about to be advocated would, among its other advantages, assuredly add to and not diminish the real importance and dignity of the British Crown and legislature. No one would hesitate more than I should at any change, even of forms, in regard to institutions, dear to us from our long habits of veneration and from the practical results of the institutions themselves. However, we do not preserve what we love by keeping up surroundings that have become inefficient and unsuitable, but rather by exercising a wide discretion and sound judgment in adapting the surroundings, from time to time, to the free and beneficial development and action of that which they are meant to strengthen and maintain.

British Crown and Legislature.

Home Rule and Federation.

At this stage, perhaps, in order to clear the ground before going further, it may be useful to say a word on some political terms—hardly proposals—which are at present familiar to us, namely, "Home Rule" and "Federation."

I do not know how many of you are in my position with respect to these terms; but for my part I have not been able to find out distinctly what they mean. Various associations and surroundings cause "Home Rule" to sound disagreeably to English ears. "Home Rule" seems largely to mean, or at least convey the idea of no other rule; it seems pointing to independence. "Federation," again, though it has been loosely applied in the domestic politics of Canada, is not the right term to apply to the different integral portions of one and the same empire such as ours. Federation, meaning a condition of being bound by a bond or treaty, is an improper word to express the connection of merely component parts of an empire. A thing cannot make a treaty with itself; it must require two separate things—two states or two empires. I should be very sorry to appear to treat disrespectfully the opinions of any section of my fellow-countrymen: but, as regards "Home Rule" and "Federation," so far as I understand these terms, I think they should go hand-in-hand off the stage.

By anticipation, I also deprecate the use, in connection with my proposal, of such parrot-phrases as "disintegrating the empire," or "restoring the Heptarchy." How the strengthening of the central government, the enlargement of our naval and military resources, the emancipation of the Imperial legislature for more useful action, can tend to disintegrate, I am unable to understand.

Mr. Canning's happy quip is equally unsuitable here. The establishment of seven kingdoms, even supposing them treaty-bound for mutual protection, will be found to have no parallel in my proposal. The phrase is ridiculous; it has no backbone. Our Colonies are not king-

doms, Ireland is not a kingdom. Scotland is not a kingdom. They are all under one Crown.

My Proposal.

I will now state to you what those who agree with me wish to bring about. If I am asked to state shortly what change the younger political men of Canada desire, I venture to reply, with the fullest conception of the practical force and meaning of the statement, that the change desired is a change that would make Vancouver Island essentially an outlying English county. To well-informed men, even of large mental grasp, who have spent their lives amid the provincial politics of England, this may seem a somewhat bold thing to say, but, according to the best of my judgment, I firmly believe that such a change can be attempted with every prospect of success practically, and of increasingly valuable results, and I invite discussion upon the subject. *We propose that Great Britain and Ireland should form an incorporating union with Canada, as England formerly united herself with Scotland.* Additionally, and as an essential part of the proposal, we wish to *advocate the adoption of the political system approved by England for Canada in the home portions of the Empire, which will then be composed of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Canada.*

This latter proposal would be an advance on a road which England is now travelling along. The Canadian political system is the natural developement of the English; it would not, therefore, be a foreign, or incongruous excrescence.

Lord Melbourne's pertinent question here arises, "Cannot you let the thing alone?"

This is precisely what cannot be done, for some reasons which I will state to you.

Loyalty of the Colonies generally.

The outlying portions of the empire are quite loyal at present, and feel pride and happiness in their connection with the old country. But we must look at the matter like sensible men. Without close political connection, the feeling for home, the feelings of a common origin, the love of the old country, patriotism itself will wear out, will die a natural death. In the ordinary course of things it must be so. These feelings may last a long time in a more or less degree. They may, for aught I know, go far, indeed, in preventing actual collision; but they are not strong enough, and have not vitality enough, to keep themselves warm perennially at the other end of the world, nor even in less remote portions of the empire, if they are left, as it were, to feed upon themselves. The prevention of this, as regards Canada, is what we desire. These feelings want mutual benefit, well-sustained intercourse, adequate protection, recognition and esteem to support them, the expectation of continuity to support them; and what tie, what bond of union more calculated to secure these results than intimate political union, based on such principles as we may rely would prevail in its formation?

There is no doubt that our relations with our great Colonies generally cannot remain as they now stand. Their connection with the mother country has a tendency to become either closer, or less close, than it

now is—stronger, more intimate, more cordial than it now is—or the reverse. Strange to say, as if natural influences were not acting quickly enough, the tendency of English governmental action, and the influence of the merely money-loss-or-gain opinions of several sections of English politicians, have certainly of late not been in the direction of increased cohesion and adhesion—the contrary. The good sense of the people, however, has put this matter right. It has been made clear that the English people would regard the loss of Colonial territory, not to speak of the breaking up of our Colonial empire, as an enormous blunder and calamity. With the instinct of a dominant race they understand what its effect would be upon the position of Great Britain among the nations of the world. They foresee that such disintegration must ultimately lead to a large decrease of that glory and usefulness which even the most un-English Englishman secretly thinks of as belonging, in part, and some very appreciable part too, to himself individually, as an Englishman; not to speak of the wrong we should be doing, by abandoning, as derelict, the extraordinary opportunities which the Almighty, as far as we may judge, has specially allotted to our nation.

The case of Canada.

What I have said of the Colonies generally may be said of Canada in particular. It is impossible to over-estimate the loyalty and good feeling of the Canadians, of whatever race. But we must, nevertheless, admit, that for the reason just stated, the connection of Canada with the mother country will either become more settled, deep-rooted, and strong—or the reverse. The alternative is inevitable. I will not speculate on her future if abandoned by England; but, whatever that future might be, it is certain that England would suffer in power, prestige, and pocket, more than if Canada had remained part of the empire.

I listened lately to a debate in the House of Commons, in which it was roundly denied by an advocate of things as they are, that there is such a thing in British politics as "a Colonial question." There is such a question; and I will tell you broadly what it is, as regards Canada, and what it will be, as regards other great Colonies.

The true colonial question.

It consists in the overpowering fact that a great community of Englishmen will not consent, for any long time, to occupy a *merely municipal position.*

It is in accordance with human nature, and particularly with English human nature, that such a community should desire to spread, at first hand, its own principles and ideas, and advance their practical developement and acceptance in as direct a manner as possible, among the nations of the world. Canada is a municipality. The sense of exclusion, the want of weight, is deeply felt in Canada at the present time. The best among the younger men feel crippled, abashed. There is among them a sense of fettered strength in the comparative inability to hold forth to the world, in national individuality, the practical embodiment of their teachings. Ireland and Scotland do this to some extent through the British Parliament. Canada has no such opportunity, and, therefore, feels dispirited, delinquent. This feeling suggests to her fusion with the British Empire, not severance from it.

Other nations armed and arming.

ain, in considering my proposal, the present aspect of the civilised must be recognised. Speakers and writers have indeed pointed in a general way, the vast protective importance of a gathering of perial resources under some arrangement, such as may possibly be pen to the British empire, and its colonies and dependencies; but they do not, to my mind, sufficiently realise the necessity of forming it, nor consequently the risk—may I say danger?—of neglecting it.

Let any thoughtful man view the altered aspect of Europe during the last few years. Let him view the altered means of national destruction and annihilation, and let him ask himself if, under these altered conditions of national existence and national position, no change is needed in national resources and national preparations and alliances? Surely, if cause and effect go together in his mind, he will answer, "Yes."

Nations, nowadays, fight for existence, and the fight neither looms long nor lasts long. I am no friend to alarmist views, nor to alarmist preparations, but at more or less distant intervals in the existence of all nations a crisis does occur, and very often it rises, like the little dark cloud from the ocean, without much notice or much delay. Surely some reasonable forecast, some reasonable system for rapid gathering of strength and power, relatively proportioned to the increased dimensions of danger, is not alarm but discretion, not weakness but judgment.

A nation, like a man, must indeed be a giant, that can, at a crisis, without a friend, hold its own. History confirms the soundness of this axiom. *The natural addition to our strength in these days of quick communication is in our great dependencies.*

Present Parliament overburdened.

There is another matter I will ask you to consider, namely, the *national convenience and relief* which would result from my proposal. I say "convenience and relief," for you will find that the adoption of the Canadian political system coincides with the relief of the British Parliament from a superfluity of comparatively unimportant, or at least non-imperial legislation, that at present is not only in itself unwelcome, but stands also sorely in the way of what is both welcome and of the highest and most extensive concern.

From time to time, the almost inability of the Parliament of this country to duly perform its legislative work has been forcing itself both upon public attention, and upon the attentive regard of our leading political men. This inability, under present conditions, must continue not only to exist, but to increase with the growth of the nation.

The fact is so well known I need not trouble you with proofs. I may just remind you, however, that *Mr. Gladstone*, whose patriotism, sincerity, and experience of public affairs no opponent can question, said lately, in a speech at Aberdeen, that any one would earn the enduring gratitude of the country who proposed some feasible method of relieving the English Parliament of work which that august body was physically unable to perform in a satisfactory manner. The other day, also, *Earl Russell*, who is second to no English statesman in experience and knowledge, published a letter in the 'Times,' proposing that four provincial parliaments should be elected in Ireland, and two

in Scotland, by which means he considered that the local wants of Ireland and Scotland might be better provided for than they are at present.

The question of disburdening the Parliament, in order to free that assembly for more useful action is, in fact, one of the questions of the day.

Quickened locomotion and communication in modern days.

Let us now look, for a moment, to some other circumstances and events which demand attention; and first, to the *quickened locomotion and communication* in these days. This must have a very important political effect, more so probably upon the British Empire than any country in the world. As regards locomotion, Mr. Greg, in a late work, points out that from the earliest dawn of history down through innumerable ages, until the time of our own grandfathers, men travelled just about as fast as a horse could carry them, and no faster. He illustrates this by stating that such old-world persons as Nimrod and Noah travelled in the same way, and at the same rate of speed, as the late Mr. Assheton Smith, or Mr. Coke of Norfolk.

More remarkable still has been the progress in the improvement of the means of communication. For instance, if King David had wished to send a message of love to Jonathan, a hundred miles away, he could not have done so under twelve hours. Mr. Pitt, in the time of our grandfathers, was in this respect in the same position as King David was. I need not say what can be done now—what the last fifty years have produced. You are aware that the remarkable triumphs of modern human skill and knowledge, in quickening locomotion and communication, have revolutionised commerce; but I invite your attention to the probability that they have prepared, or are preparing, the way for political developements in the British Empire, of which, perhaps, at present we have but a small idea. Think of the effect of discovering a more portable fuel for steamships, or of laying fifty submarine cables where one now is laid! Both the needs of the present time, and the just expectations we may have as regards the future, point clearly in the direction of increased cohesion of the empire. We are all one in heart, and when this is the case we can get over obstacles that keep us from being one in fact.

Mercantile bearing of my proposal.

From a *mercantile point of view* my proposal is also worthy of your consideration. We should not let slip the large opportunities for business which are opening before us—principally in two quarters, namely in Central Canada and the Pacific Ocean.

The amount of business which may be done by our children in these quarters will be enormous, and my proposal will ensure that this business will not be impeded by hostile tariffs. *Central Canada* is the country between Manitobah province and the Rocky Mountains. The territory is very extensive, and more inviting to farmers than any unoccupied territory which the United States have east of the Rocky Mountains. In a few years the entire expansive movement of population on the American Continent will concentrate in this fertile region, because, already, the western progress of the population of the United

States has nearly reached the extreme western limit of the areas available for settlement within the United States.

It is not sufficiently understood in England that the greater part of the space west of the 98th parallel, embracing one-half of the entire surface of the United States, is an arid and desolate waste, with the exception of a narrow belt of rich land along the Pacific Coast. Population, then, must naturally concentrate in Central Canada, even without great effort to make it do so; and I submit to you that to lay foundations to secure the vast future trade of that region, unobstructed by tariffs, is a matter of importance to every man who pays or receives wages in England.

The mention of this possible trade in Central Canada leads me on naturally to mention, secondly, *the trade of the Pacific*, because the shortest and best road from England to the Pacific Ocean is through Central Canada to a Canadian port in British Columbia by a railway which will be finished in a few years. From a stand-point in Canada it can be realised that there are, say 500,000,000 people west of the Pacific, as against 250,000,000 east of the Atlantic; and the Asiatics, it is said, are beginning to like flour better than rice. Their old civilisation is giving way; they are yielding to the impulses of the age; and are preparing to enter into commercial relations with the world.

Look east and west from a stand-point in Canada.

The Americans know the value of the Pacific trade very well, but they cannot fight against nature; and nature has given the good land and the short road to Canada, with coals along the whole line, and superb harbours on the shore of the Pacific, in British Columbia. The climate in that province is probably unequalled, and there are, in abundance, timber, coal, iron, fish, wheat, and all domestic grasses; also the potato, apple, pear, and plum. Steamships from China or Japan would find it much shorter to Vancouver Island than to California. The distance afterwards by rail from the Pacific to Montreal will be 600 miles less than from San Francisco to New York. For sailing-vessels also, a Canadian city in British Columbia would be practically nearer to China than San Francisco is, because sailing-vessels leaving San Francisco for China are compelled, on account of the prevailing winds, to make what sailors call a "northing" quite up to the Straits of Fuca, in consequence of which, a vessel starting from the latter point for the same destination in China would have an advantage of several days over her San Francisco competitor.

Here I will meet an objection to my proposal generally that is sure to be heard—*the objection of distance—the existence of the Atlantic.* Canada, you may say, is too far off for any closer political union. Mr. Gladstone, in a debate in the House of Commons in April, 1870, said:—"We could not overlook the countless miles of ocean rolling between the colonies and us, so unlike the position of the United States."

Objection of distance considered.

The effect of distance, however, as I have shown, is not what it has been. The proceedings of the English House of Commons any night, can be discussed next morning at Canadian breakfast-tables; and men can come from Canada to London as quickly and more comfortably than

from Scotland to London, for many years after the union of England and Scotland. It is proposed to have steamboats to run from Ireland to Canada in *five* days. I will point out to you further that the Canadian political system is very suitable to disconnected territories such as ours. It satisfies provincial, and might satisfy also national feelings; it displays on a grand scale the principle of local government and Imperial decision.

It is not the case that our position in this matter is worse than that of the United States. The populous portions of Canada are for all purposes nearer London than the Pacific States of the Union are to Washington.

When mere distance is considered in reference to populations animated by feelings of loyalty and patriotism, it loses much of the effect which untravelled, imaginative persons ascribe to it. Of such populations we may say:—

> "'Tis wonderful
> That an invisible instinct should frame them
> To loyalty unlearned, honour untaught."

As regards the United States, which Mr. Gladstone referred to, let me remind you that until the trans-continental railway was made the quickest communication between the Atlantic and Pacific States was for letters 18 to 19 days, and for passengers 21 to 24 days. The country passed through a terrible civil war, yet the Federal Government business in the Pacific States went on as usual. The railway has shortened the time of communication now to about a week, weather permitting; that is to say, has made the communication between the extreme eastern and extreme western States of the Union, just about what it is, or will soon be, between England and Canada. A good rough test of the value of means of communication for governmental purposes is the time that would be occupied in sending an army from one point to another of the territory of a nation. There seems little doubt, judging by the teachings of the Franco-German war, that an equipped army could be transported more quickly and comfortably between England and Canada than between the Atlantic and Pacific States of the Union. The Atlantic might be covered with steamboats, but a few single rails only will stretch across the desolate centre of the United States. Yet, as above said, Government business goes on well between the east and west of the United States; and I say that what is possible under their political constitution can be done under ours. I turn Mr. Gladstone's argument against himself, and adduce the United States' example in favour of my proposal instead of against it. It matters little whether a Member of Parliament is carried over the water or over the land to his place of business, and a day or two more or less on his journey is of no consequence. I would rather have the disadvantage of our sea Atlantic than of the *land Atlantic* which they have within the United States. I dare say some of you have travelled across that country, and know what is seen west of the 9-th parallel. When you get west from Omaha, the settlements become scarcer and more primitive; you see long stretches of wild prairie, only here and there broken by scattered cornfields. At length agri-

Desolate central region of the United States.

culture totally ceases; the landscape is a barren solitude; the grass becomes thinner, and the appearance of a tree rarer. Journeying onward, the morning shows the same scenery which night had veiled—the same barren plain, broken only by rocky banks, the same thin vegetation. By-and-by the desert comes in view—a level plain as far as the eye can reach, covered with a white crust of alkali like a snow-field. Hour after hour is passed without a break in the monotony.

We cannot stand still.

Upon the whole then, for many reasons applicable on both sides of the Atlantic, we are *unable to let matters rest, or to let them drift, as Lord Melbourne might have proposed,* because if we do so, they will move on without us, and take a direction unfavourable to our mercantile and national prosperity. It is possible that less advanced steps, and less extensive change, may be proposed and perhaps adopted, but these minor and more hesitating measures would, I think, but precede the eventual change which we advocate. The course of legislation in this country has for a considerable time been becoming from necessity more and more Imperial in its scope. It seems almost like continuing a man in boy's clothes to keep the England, present and to come, within the limits of the same machinery as the more contracted instrumentality hitherto found sufficient, or, I should rather say, usable.

We seem now to be in a position not, in many respects, unlike the position once occupied by England when an entire and permanent union with Scotland was found to be essential to the peace, safety, and happiness of both kingdoms; only in place of the England of that time, we now have to put Great Britain and Ireland; and in place of the Scotland of that time, we have to put one or other of our great dependencies —I suggest Canada. I limit my proposal to Canada, though the question once raised is like many other questions; it raises others which, with similar claims, promise similar and increased advantages.

It is not from any levity of estimation, nor from any neglect of due investigation, that I ask you to bear in mind that the incorporation of Canada is my object at present. This may, or may not be, the first instalment of a more abundant union of British territory, full of promise for good in the world. I am not required, and am probably unable to speak for other communities, which are well able to make plans and to speak for themselves.

Well, then, having regard to these weighty facts which I have brought to your notice, and bearing in mind, especially, that legislation and administration are strictly matters of business, in arranging which all theory should be avoided, it seemed to us desirable to seek for some remedial arrangement that should be in harmony with the historical experience, and with the expectations of the British people. We asked ourselves the question, whether nothing could be found in the wide experience of the empire to help us in this matter.

Union of England and Scotland —a good precedent.

Upon reflection, it appeared that the proposal I have named to you would probably meet the case; that is to say, the proposal to form *an incorporating union with Canada, and to adopt, as far as may be suitable, the Canadian political system for England, Ireland, Scotland,*

and Canada. The union of England and Scotland, as before observed, is a good precedent for our guidance, and so is the formation of the Dominion of Canada.

The practical character of this present proposal, and the probability that it would really remedy grievous ills that exist, and others that are imminent, are viewed by me with confiding satisfaction and hopefulness, principally because I know how matters work in Canada, and because I am practically acquainted with the questions involved in the union with the Dominion, of provinces which had not at first joined it. I am aided greatly also by the teaching of history.

There is a remarkable similarity in the proceedings of the English and Scotch Commissioners who settled the terms of union between England and Scotland in Queen Anne's time, and in the proceedings of the statesmen who agreed to the formation of the Dominion of Canada in the reign of Queen Victoria. The same questions appear in the protocols, and are discussed in almost the same order. They appeared again whenever a colony joined the Dominion which had not at first joined it. I hope to see these old well-worn questions once more considered within my lifetime by the Commissioners who may arrange for practically carrying out the proposal which I advocate. Our descendants may hear similar questions discussed between Hindoos and Britons of one empire.

Stick to precedents.

I point with hopefulness to these facts, and particularly to the fact that the Canadian political constitution has been tried, which goes far with us practical, precedent-loving Britons. We love to do as our fathers did. We approve the tentative process by which, in nearly everything national, this country has advanced. We have been accustomed to take a step, and give it an almost wearisome test of practical advantage before we take another. Our people generally would, I think, with difficulty be persuaded to any other habit.

Well, then, let us turn our eyes for a moment to the *proceedings in the case of union between England and Scotland.*

The great majority of the Scotch people at first desired rather a federal than an incorporating union, because Scotland was an ancient kingdom, and the people thought that an incorporating union with England would imply a surrender of their national independence. This obstacle was the chief obstacle to the long projected union, which had been naturally suggested by the union of the two crowns in one person. Opinion, however, in time favoured the idea that nothing but an entire union of the two kingdoms would ensure perfect and lasting friendship between them. When Scotland agreed to this, it was considered that nothing remained but to adjust details; not, as it turned out, a very easy matter, for many conflicting interests had to be harmonised, and deep-rooted prejudices to be overcome.

Proceedings in the case of union of England and Scotland.

First came the fiscal question of the apportionment of the public burdens between a wealthy nation loaded with debt, and a poorer and less indebted nation. It was argued that equal taxation over the United Kingdom would be unjust, as Scotland would be compelled to

contribute towards the extinction of a debt which Scotland had not incurred. England objected to this, that any great exemption in favour of Scotland would have the effect of transferring most of the trade from England to Scotland. The way in which this difficult question was settled was as follows:—

The English Commissioners considered equality of taxation a necessary condition of an entire and permanent union. They regarded this as a vitally important element in the treaty. Accordingly, they proposed that there should be the same customs, excises, and all other taxes, and the same prohibitions, restrictions, and regulations of trade throughout the United Kingdom.

Recognising, however, that this would be hard upon Scotland at first, owing to the poverty of the country, they at once anticipated objections by offering compensation in money for the sacrifices which the arrangement might demand from Scotland. The general principle of this proposal was accepted by the Scottish Commissioners, but at their request the matter was discussed in detail. In this subsequent discussion, the Scottish Commissioners could not help suggesting that some limit should be fixed beyond which the amount of taxation upon Scotland could not extend. To this the English Commissioners made reply that it could not be supposed that the Parliament of the United Kingdom would ever lay any other burdens upon the United Kingdom than were for the good of the whole, and to allow any other supposition would set up an unanswerable argument against the Union itself.

The end of it was, that what was called an equivalent to Scotland was agreed upon. The equivalent for that portion of the customs and excise of Scotland which would be applicable to the liquidation of the English debt was calculated, and found to be about 400,000*l.* The debt of England was then about 18,000,000*l.*

It was calculated that of every 1000*l.* a year of additional customs duty levied in Scotland, 792*l.* would go to pay the debt with which England was burdened, and of every additional 1000*l.* of excise duty levied in Scotland, about 625*l.* would go in payment of the debt of England. The "equivalent" was intended as compensation to Scotland for submitting to this burden. The pressure of the Land-tax in Scotland also was modified, owing to the low rentals in Scotland as compared with England, and various exemptions from duties were granted temporarily to Scotland, for instance on salt, coals, windows, &c. A further agreement was, that the additional taxes levied in Scotland after union should, for seven years, be applied to the encouragement of Scottish manufactures, fisheries, and to other useful national objects.

Another great subject of discussion between the English and Scottish Commissioners was the Parliamentary representation. It is considered in Scotland that the Scottish Commissioners did not stand out with firmness on this matter. They argued that the true basis of representation was population, not wealth, and that the Scotch people formed

a sixth part of the population of the island, and so forth. The English argument was that the number of Scottish representatives ought to be in proportion to the amount contributed by Scotland to the public burdens of the State. A number was fixed upon finally, as a compromise, without reference to any principle of representation.

I need not describe further the particulars of this Treaty, of which, on its ratification, Queen Anne, in her speech to Parliament, said it was a matter of the greatest importance to the wealth, strength, and safety of the whole island, and at the same time a work of so much difficulty and nicety in its own nature that all attempts for above a hundred years had proved ineffectual.

Proceedings at formation of Dominion of Canada.

As already said, very much the same discussions as those between the English and Scottish Commissioners took place between the delegates of the North American Colonies, who considered the question of the formation of the Dominion of Canada a few years ago. The main proposal, that is, the desirability of uniting these colonies to the fullest extent permitted by circumstances, was opposed by none. But many different interests had to be reconciled, more perhaps than would have to be reconciled in incorporating England and Canada. Many matters had to be taken into account in order to prevent any one of the colonies from suffering by union with the others. The wealth, trade, population, resources, debts, &c. of the provinces had to be compared.

In proportion to the population, Nova Scotia had the greatest revenue; Canada and New Brunswick, the greatest debts. The expenditure of Canada, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland, was greater in proportion than that of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

The difficulties of detail, in fact, were very great, but it would be impossible to describe these here.

An ingenious plan was followed to arrange the money affairs of the provinces, so as to be just to all. Finally an union was accomplished. I recommend to your perusal the narrative of the "Debates on Confederation," which fills a volume of more than 1000 pages. It will explain the difficulties of the proposal, and show the good sense and patriotism of your fellow-subjects in Canada, who overcame these difficulties and gave us a valuable political precedent for our guidance.

The Scottish and the Canadian precedents will give some idea of the kind of work involved in the present proposal to incorporate Great Britain, Ireland, and Canada. Without these precedents I could not have ventured to bring the proposal within the domain of practical politics; but having something to build upon in these great precedents, I hoped that the practical wisdom and sense of our political men and of our people generally would soon guide them, in conjunction with the leading members and people of the Dominion, in adjusting the necessary details. I have already said that I do not propose to enter minutely into details at present. Details must be taken up and considered in due course, after we have arrived at some agreement on the general question. Any other method of treating so extensive a subject would lead to confusion. I trust you are disposed to agree with me that

the proposal which I make would act triply in beneficial and needful directions.

It would bind to us more securely our almost English Canada. It would be the first instalment perhaps of a more abundant union, full of promise for good, and it certainly would harmonise with the relief of our present Parliament. Still, though these are the main points on which I wish to satisfy you, and though I do not profess to regulate details in this address, yet I think you may expect from me some considerable statement of my views on the money or fiscal question, which is one of the main questions that will have to be considered.

The Fiscal Question.

The arguments used at the time of the English and Scottish Union would be again used in this case, but the decision would have to be different, I think, in some respects.

The main questions would be:—

"*The liability of Canada to pay a portion of the annual taxation needed for the interest of the national debt, which Great Britain is now liable for.*"

"*The future supremacy of the Imperial Parliament as regards Imperial Tariffs and other fiscal matters entrusted to it.*"

As regards the first of these questions, Canada cannot, I think, be held liable for any portion of the interest on *our existing national debt.* That debt must be apportioned as provincial debts to England, Ireland, and Scotland, which at present bear its burden. For *future Imperial debts*, Canada, of course, would be liable as a part of the empire.

The accomplished fact of Canada being now entirely free from the existing national debt of Great Britain and Ireland at once militates strongly against the idea of her liability for it. It is one thing to bear a burden, and another thing to return to it, or bend down voluntarily to receive it as a fresh load upon the shoulders, particularly when the debt is so enormous.

Apart from this consideration, there are valid and just reasons why Canada should continue unburdened by our *existing national debt.* Large parts of this debt have been contracted, it is true, for wars wholly unprofitable to England, and wholly unnecessary. On the other hand, a large share of our debt has been contracted for objects that have consolidated our power, and have been greatly instrumental in securing the peace of Europe, and thereby allowing and facilitating our extraordinary commercial prosperity.

Many other advantages have followed. This much, at least, we may say, under our system of expenditure, approved or not approved, England has become a country offering immense advantages to her people. The vast external and internal trade of this wealthy island, the advanced stage of civilisation she has reached, the innumerable opportunities she presents for talent, capital, and perseverance, the wide-spread comforts and means of enjoyment she displays, are the sequel, and more or less the consequence, of her policy and her outlay.

The very fact of our immense debt, incubus as it is, has its advantages, as it affords a safe investment for capital, and your heavy stock-

Fiscal Question.

holder is no mean supporter of the genius and energy of the country, and no mean employer of its industry. Our national debt is also a strong inducement to settled order and political moderation in this country—a country whose social organization cannot, from some points of view, be said to be very wholesome. Our debt, then, glad as we might be to be rid of it, has its favourable aspects, strange as at first sight it may appear to say so, as well as the drawback of paying its interest. How can we ask the Canadian to share the disadvantages, without his being able to share the advantages, as we share them, and still may share them? From the nature of things, the Canadian cannot fully have the advantages in this matter which we have. The resident Englishman alone has the full benefit of these favourable results, and for this benefit I think it is just that he should continue to pay the taxes required for the existing national debt of Great Britain. The Canadian enjoys but in a very limited and remote degree a share of these specialities, and he should accordingly be free.

As regards other money arrangements, I will advance no merely speculative theory, however good. I will do, as I have endeavoured to do from the beginning—I will point to experience. Your attention shall be directed to the actual arrangements with respect to Colonial debts at the formation of the several colonies into the Dominion of Canada.

The following arrangement was agreed to at the formation of the Dominion, with respect to the separate debts of the colonies which were to form the Dominion, and with respect also to future Dominion revenues.

The Dominion took over the debts of the colonies as they stood at the date of the formation of the Dominion. The Dominion also takes the public revenues, but it pays to the Provinces certain fixed sums yearly to enable them to support their governments, and to place the burden of the whole public debt and its interest, in equitable shares, upon the people of the several provinces.

This arrangement would be suitable on incorporating Canada with us. I may here interpose the remark that the reasons which I advanced for not requiring Canada to share our existing debt did not apply to the case of the Dominion taking the debts of the colonies. The colonial territories formed an integral part of the whole country that was about to be embraced within the Dominion, and the inhabitants of each shared, more largely than in the case of Britain and Canada, the benefit of the general condition, social, political, and otherwise, which prevailed throughout our North American territory. The reasoning, therefore, which supports the non-liability of Canada for the existing national debt of Great Britain, would in this respect be inapplicable to the case of the Dominion government in its dealings with the North American colonies.

I would propose, then, that at the time of union the Imperial Government should take over the public debt of the Dominion of Canada. For the future, the Imperial Government would receive the

public Imperial revenues of the Imperial territory called Canada, just as it would receive those of the other Imperial provinces of England, Ireland, and Scotland. The Imperial Government would pay to these several provinces, or their provincial subdivisions, certain fixed sums yearly for purposes just described. This is the actual system now working smoothly in Canada, which has provinces that will soon be as populous as Scotland. The idea is not unfamiliar in England, and would merely be an expansion of the plan by which a certain portion of the Imperial revenue is handed over to local bodies as a subsidy towards the discharge of local expenses. Fiscal Question.

Probably the fair way to adjust the amount of the payment from the Imperial Government to the provinces would be to make it proportionate, as it is at present in Canada, to the number of the population of the different provinces.

I will now name some *matter of fact and tangible good effects* that would be produced by the adoption of the fiscal settlement which I have shadowed forth.

All British goods, of which the Canadians import very considerably, would be procurable by Canadians at a lower price than that for which they can now obtain them. Our almost unbounded opportunities for cheap production and manufacture in England would more and more benefit the Canadian consumer. He would be benefited also, probably, by the wider field that would be opened up for his benefit from English competition at home in producing for the Canadian market. This last-named benefit applies also to the advantage England would receive by the arrangement. It would be mutual.

So also would be the benefits derived from opening and securing the trade of the Pacific, in addition to that of Central Canada. These benefits would be mutual, but very specially in favour of Canada, owing to her geographical position.

A certain section of the Canadian population, whose opinions are entitled to grave consideration, would probably, at the first glance, object to my plan—I mean some of the manufacturers in Canada. They would say that in a comparatively new country, protective import duties were necessary for manufacturing interests. They could not compete with the producing powers of a country so powerful in her manufacturing resources as England.

Speaking of Canadian opinion generally, I believe the following to be an approximate estimate of Canadian opinion on the matter of import duties.

The general opinion of Canada, at present, especially among the farmers of Ontario and the people of the maritime provinces, appears to be in favour of as much free trade as possible, but import duties for revenue necessities are not objected to.

It is thought that the present import duties should be gradually reduced, as fast as the exigencies of the country will permit. Even many Canadians, who are not thorough Free Traders, consider that the present moderate tariff is high enough to afford all the incidental

Fiscal Question. protection required. On the whole, then, English and Canadian opinion on tariff matters will be found not to differ much.

But, as above said, there is a respectable minority who argue that a certain amount of protection would stimulate such manufactures as Canada is naturally fitted to undertake, and would produce greater diversity of employment in the country. They say that the want of this variety of employment is one reason why young Canadians go to the States. This party would like the 20 per cent. tariff list restored, with several alterations. They would balance the increase of duties on imported manufactured goods by reducing the duties on tea, sugar, spices, and other articles of common use, which do not come into competition with manufactures that can be beneficially carried on in the Dominion.

The case of this minority, many of whom have made fixed investments in the country, should be considered.

The general reply I would give to this minority is that we must bear in mind that the population of Canada, as a whole, is, and will be specially, an agricultural population. Its manufacturing interest, as compared with its agricultural interest, is not at present, and probably will not be, weighty enough to make it desirable to sacrifice, in any large degree, the latter to the former. Indeed it may be called a political and a social necessity not to do so.

It is by no means my wish here voluntarily to propose anything injurious to Canadian manufacture, but I am compelled to treat my subject as a whole. Should the fiscal arrangements I propose be made, it would perhaps be just towards Canadian manufacturers to follow the Scottish precedent, and allow time before the Imperial tariff came into force on certain articles, with an option to Canada to adopt the whole Imperial tariff sooner if she wished. This option was given by the Dominion of Canada to some of the provinces desirous of joining the Dominion, but specially circumstanced.

Of course, as Canada progressed in population and in commercial importance, we must expect an increase also in her manufacturing powers. Her exemption from the heavy provincial debt of England, inherited from the old national debt, would favour the progress of Canada, and be a considerable set-off against her unequal competition with England as the possessor of unbounded opportunities for cheap production. It should, however, be a great object to allow no change that would stamp out Canadian manufacturing progress. A nation which is agricultural only does not keep pace usually now-a-days with the mighty moving world around it.

I have, in an humble way, been a champion of free-trade in one part of Canada, and therefore I need not say that I approve free-trade. But to all rules some exception is allowed, and this case of a comparatively new country is just the one where, though thoroughly approving the rule of free-trade, one may be obliged for political reasons to have recourse, to a certain small extent, to the exception.

Canadian trade and manufactures must not be extinguished, indeed such a prospect would go for much in inducing Canadians to reject an incorporating union. The matter should be fairly discussed, as between

two great nations with common interests. I would expect, for my part, that Canada, after the fullest consideration, would find it to be her plain interest to join the empire without any large fiscal reservations. As an Imperial province, represented in the Imperial Parliament, Canada would be on the same footing as the other Imperial provinces. She would get capital and population from England more quickly and freely than she does now, and, in a few years, with her coal-beds and water-power, it might be the English and not the Canadian manufacturer or producer of certain articles who would feel the pressure of competition. Fiscal Question.

The feeling to be encouraged is that an English manufacturer should no more think of complaining of Canadian than of Scotch competition.

To speak now, further, of the benefit that would attend the fact of the above proposed fiscal settlement as regards Great Britain and Ireland. One short sentence will in itself convey to you quite enough to make you see its desirability to this country. It would probably double or treble the present English trade with Canada, as the splendid unoccupied territories of British North America filled up with population. At the present time no country receives so large an amount of goods per head from Great Britain as Canada.

The matter for the Canadians to weigh in this fiscal business seems to be whether they prefer their present position in reference to taxation, duties, &c., to the advantages which the change holds out. I hope they will see that they really would be no losers, but greatly gainers, by accepting the plan which I propose. There also would be no loss of dignity and *prestige* by thus forming Canada so closely a living member of the body Imperial—the same circulation for each and every, and for the whole.

I sincerely hope the reasonableness of these views will be accepted on both sides of the Atlantic.

Before passing from this part of my subject, I will renew my protest for the encouragement of existing manufacturing interest and trade in Canada. I offer my proposals as a whole.

I meet again any objection that may be urged against any partial deviation from accepted general principles, should such deviation be found necessary. The present case is anomalous. It falls under the head of special condition, not perhaps contemplated until lately by any one. I view it as a case where special treatment is required.

We know how to meet special cases. We do not repine in doing so; for instance, on the abolition of slavery, a large award was made by England to the West India proprietors. I might also refer to our action in regard to the late French treaty. Few condemn these actings; and in dealing with Canadian manufacturers, placed as they are now placed, and affected as they might be, I think no one would condemn a liberal adjustment of partially conflicting claims.

It would be a mere surface argument against my suggestion to say that in England any particular manufacturing interest has to submit to the loss occasioned by a change in the law.

Fiscal Question.

And it would be a mere surface argument, for two reasons.

In the first place our *whole* manufacturing interest is never jeopardised by legal change, as might perhaps be the case in Canada.

Secondly, when a merchant or manufacturer in England begins his business, he does it with the full knowledge that he is subject to this chance. It is one of the risks of his commercial life, and must be, as far as it may be, insured against by making it form one part of his calculations of needful profit. Now, nothing of this can be said of the Canadian manufacturing interest, as far as the effect of any possible Imperial intervention is concerned. We must deal with the whole question simply on principles of justice applied to the existing conditions appertaining to it. I have stated what I think would be just.

We sympathise to a large extent, even in this country, with any particular interest injuriously affected by legal change, but to inflict a continuous depression, or worse, on Canadian trade generally would be intolerable.

I will just remark, in passing from the fiscal question, that there is a second course open in place of an incorporating union with Canada, namely, a closer connection of Canada with us, leaving our national burthens as they now rest—on our own shoulders—and leaving her own burdens to Canada, and also the regulation of her own fiscal affairs.

This half-and-half federating project was once cherished in Scotland, but, as I have shown you, was discussed and abandoned at the time of the union with England. It would not suit the case of Canada. It might or might not suit remoter portions of the empire. I am not prepared to support any such proposition satisfactorily by argument.

So much, then, upon the fiscal question.

Having now spoken of the fiscal or money question, as one of the principal questions for our consideration, I remind you that in an earlier part of my address I enforced the need of some *gathering of Imperial strength and power* proportionate to the increased dimensions of danger looming before us, owing to the present lamentable condition of the civilised world, in which nation appears to be set against nation. Look, I repeat, at the immense aggressive powers of many nations at the present day! Whole populations are turned into armies, while the limited boundaries of our own islands are choked up already by a population that is almost to be called a pigmy population to supply a force equal to the accumulation of men whom a hostile alliance might oppose to us. I can hardly see from what sources, under the existing organisation of the empire, we can with confident reliance depend on drawing the supplement of force which a combination of untoward circumstances might demand. The strong man armed keeps his goods in peace. We should be both strong and armed.

Military and Naval Resources of Canada.

Ten years ago the militia systems of the various colonies which are now embraced within the Dominion were rude and defective, but Canada has now a thoroughly organised force, which increases every year in numbers and efficiency.

At the enrolment in 1869 the enrolled reserve militia, comprising

every man liable to military service, numbered 656,000 men. In 1871 it had increased to 694,000 men. Military and Naval Resources of Canada.

These are divided into different classes, each class being compelled to furnish all its men fit for service in any district before the next is called upon to send its quota to the drill-room or camp. Forty-five thousand men of the active militia are embodied and drilled in each year, most of them in brigade or division camps of exercise for sixteen days' continuous drill, during which time they are paid and supplied under ordinary regulations. In half-a-dozen years the number of fairly-drilled Canadian soldiers of splendid material will be very large. Even as it is, 30,000 men, thoroughly fit to take the field, could be assembled at any point within three or four days, well equipped and commanded, and trained to fight and move as required by the changed conditions of modern war.

In the mercantile marine of Canada there are 80,000 prime sailors, without any question unsurpassed in the world.

If we duly weigh these simple facts, and bear in mind that the population of Canada is increasing, and that a Canadian army could be landed in this country within three weeks from the receipt of a telegram requiring soldiers, it seems probable that any European powers meditating the invasion of England, will in no long time have to take account of the growing military and naval reserves of the empire in Canada.

In what I have already said, I have shadowed forth some reasons why England should *form an incorporating union with Canada.* This may be considered the first branch of my proposal. But, as already said, my proposition is that something further should take place.

I wish to advocate, as an essential part of the proposal, the *adoption of the political system approved by England for Canada in the home portions of the empire, which will then be composed of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Canada.* It is therefore necessary that I should explain what this political constitution is, without mentioning details on which you can easily inform yourselves.

The existing Canadian political constitution is the programme of the English Liberal party, developed and suitably regulated by conservatism. It is a system very applicable to widely extended, scattered territories. Political Constitution of Canada.

I know that Canada is a young country, in the government of which many questions do not arise which arise in England. The conditions of government are far more simple in Canada than in England. There are few large cities in Canada, and the country is thinly peopled. Canadian statesmen have to consider questions material, rather than social and political questions, because the race of political reform has been ended, and the people have all the power which they want or need. There are not in Canada privileged orders, institutions, and establishments which have struck their roots deeply into the soil, as is the case in England.

But Canada is thoroughly, and perhaps pre-eminently, English in her political ways; also in our estimation of her, and in the loyal

Political Constitution of Canada.

appreciation of England by her people, of whatever race; and I submit to you that a successful working example in practical politics, with such a population as that of Canada, is, so far as it goes, the nearest approach possible that we can have as to what we may expect from the same system if adopted in Great Britain and Ireland.

Let me explain to you the general principles of the Canadian constitution, so that we may judge of the value of the Canadian example to us in this discussion.

Many of you, perhaps, have a vague idea that the Canadian constitution is like the American; whereas, in fact, the two are as unmixable as oil and water.

The line which divides a constitutional monarchy from a republic is quite appreciated in Canada.

I will state to you the truth in this matter. The Canadian constitution differs essentially from the American; and differs from the American essentially on those points which probably have alarmed and repulsed Englishmen.

I shall not more largely than is required for my purpose refer to the Federal Constitution of the United States, because it does not form a precedent which can be followed in our empire.

The principle of the United States federation—a principle regulated, but not greatly weakened, by the late war—is that each State is a sovereign State, which consents to delegate to a central authority a portion of its sovereign power, leaving the remainder, which is not so delegated, in its own hands, absolute and intact. I need hardly remind you that this is not the position of British Colonies and dependencies. Instead of being isolated sovereign States, they are integral parts of the British empire. They cannot delegate their sovereign authority, even in part, to a central government, because they do not possess the sovereign authority to delegate.

The first important fact in the Canadian constitution is the following. I hope you will bear in mind, as regards Canada, that, so far as the Canadians could effect it by legislation, they followed the example of Scotland, and provided that for all time to come the Sovereign of Great Britain should be the Sovereign of British North America. This was not an act of mere sentiment, but the result of political conviction.

By this firm adherence to the monarchical principle the Canadians avoided, for one thing, an inconvenience inherent in the constitution of the United States.

The President of the United States, during his short term of office, is scarcely, in one sense, the sovereign and chief of the nation. With more truth we may call him the successful leader of a party.

The inconvenience of this is increased by the possibility of the re-election of the President. During the President's first term of office, one great object with him must be to secure, if possible, his own re-election, and the continuance of his party in power.

The Canadians have avoided this defect. They, further, have

secured another advantage not enjoyed in the United States. The Canadian constitution provides practically for an effectual control, to be exercised by the Canadian Parliament over the government of the country. The system of executive administration commonly called "responsible government," which had existed in Canada since 1841, was retained in the new Dominion Constitution of 1867; and thus an advantage was secured which is not enjoyed to the same extent in the United States. There, the President, during his term of office, is, more or less, according to the force of his character, in a great degree a despot, a one-man power. He commands the naval and military forces. As head of the executive, he has an immense amount of patronage. He exercises a veto-power as a branch of the legislature. He is perfectly uncontrolled by responsible advisers, though controlled, in certain respects, by the United States' Senate. The Cabinet of the President of the United States is composed of departmental officers merely, whom he is not obliged by the Constitution to consult with, unless he chooses to do so. Political Constitution of Canada.

In Canada, as in England, the Sovereign can act only upon the advice of ministers, and these ministers are directly responsible to the people through Parliament.

Another advantage in the Canadian constitution is the avoidance of what is commonly known as the States' Rights difficulty. This difficulty and danger, arising from conflict between the Local and Central Governments, has existed in the United States ever since they were formed into a Union. The difficulty is more or less incidental in all federations.

The separate States of the Union, from the first, as already said, declared that each State was a sovereignty by itself, and that all the powers essential to, and incident to, sovereignty, belonged to each State individually, and continued to belong to each, except those powers which, by the constitution of the United States, were transferred to, and conferred upon, the general Government and Congress.

I am careful in noting this grand and almost fatal defect in the constitution of the United States, not only for its own gravity, but because I think it very probable that many persons, who may not have made themselves intimately acquainted with the particulars and facts of the Canadian constitution may, under the impression that it resembles the American, receive with an unfounded and unnecessary suspicion and dread the idea of any English political action following upon a full appreciation of the Canadian example in political matters.

I trust this plain statement of the facts of the case, both in the United States and in Canada, will remove from such persons any remaining prejudice, and that they will judge the matter by its own merits.

Not only may they dismiss from their minds any dread of ill consequences arising from a kindly consideration and even adoption of the Canadian example, but they will also, I think, see that the removal of the States' Rights difficulty, should such be feared, is so entirely in the hands of the British Government, and the warning of neglect so

Political Constitution of Canada.

palpable and so thoroughly startling, as evidenced in the late horrible struggle in the United States between the North and the South, that fear on this head really should not needlessly prevent them from contemplating and duly weighing the prospect and advisability of such proposals as those which I suggest for your consideration.

Well, then, you see that in Canada a political constitution exists which totally differs from that of the United States. Warned by their neighbours' example, the Canadians began at the other end.

To use a homely simile, they took up the other end of the stick, and they believe they have got the best end. They strengthened the General Government.

The Canadians gave the General Government all the great subjects of legislation. They conferred on the General Government, not only specifically and in detail, all the powers which belong to sovereignty, but they also expressly declared that all subjects of general concern, not distinctly specified as subjects for the local governments and legislatures, should be referred to the general government and legislature for decision and action. They avoided, it is believed, the risk of serious conflict of jurisdiction and authority, and yet provided ample guarantees for local institutions and local laws.

At the hazard of being tedious, let me further say, with a view to your full and entire information on this matter, that, as regards those subjects which belong of right both to the local and general parliaments, it is provided by the Canadian constitution, in order to prevent a conflict of authority, that, when there is a concurrent jurisdiction in the general and local parliaments, the same rule shall apply as now applies in cases where there is a concurrent jurisdiction in the Imperial and in the Colonial parliaments, and that, when the legislation of one is adverse to, or contradictory to, the legislation of the other, in all such cases the action of the General Parliament must overrule, *ex necessitate*, the action of the local parliament.

There is nothing, then, left to be desired in the action of Canada with reference to a constitutional monarchy, and a strong settled government. You may ask, what has been done about an Upper House?

Upper House in Canada.

There is an Upper House for the whole Dominion, and the provinces may have one or not, as they please. Some of the provinces have, and some have not. The most populous province, Ontario, has only one legislative House. It gives satisfaction to the people, and thus promises to show that the existence of an Upper House is not, in all cases, necessary to constitutional government. A second House, however, though perhaps not necessary in every province, will probably be always necessary for the whole Dominion if the Dominion continues to exist in its present form, as it certainly always will be for the British empire, owing to the increasing complexity of modern legislation, and the consequent need of revision.

The Upper House at present existing in the Dominion is called a Senate.

The members of the Canadian Senate are appointed by the Crown, and hold office for life.

Theoretical argument is much in favour of the Senate. The number of its members is comparatively small; they hold authority for a fixed time, and being honourable, elderly men of respectability and wealth, they are not likely to be influenced unduly by local prejudices. But, gentlemen, I was in the Senate Chamber of Canada the other day, and, looking round, I asked the boy-attendant where the visitors sat. "Oh," said the boy, "nobody ever comes here." The truth is that legislation is not yet so complex in Canada as to give any large opportunity for the Senate to act either as a Chamber of first instance, or as a Chamber of revision. As for resisting or modifying the deliberate decision of the people, that cannot be done by any Upper House in England or the Colonies. The United States' Senate can do so to some extent, but, in reality, only as it responsibly interprets the people's decision.

That great Assembly, however, as you are aware, represents the distinct being and sovereignty of the different States, which cannot be done really by any Senate in the British dominions, for no portion or province of these dominions is distinct and sovereign of itself. The United States' Senate also shares in the executive government of the country. It can confirm or annul the acts of the President as regards appointments to certain offices, and as regards the conclusion of treaties.

The Second Chamber question is a very difficult one, and no less interesting than difficult; but I do not propose to discuss it here in all its bearings, beyond saying, that, in practice, the indraught of power is towards one of any two Assemblies, and away from the other. The two cannot be equally powerful, and the sense of responsibility is weakened in proportion to the diminution of real power in any Assembly, as is evident from the examples of the House of Representatives in the United States, and of the Senate of Canada and the House of Lords in England. These Assemblies lack power, and they do not feel responsibility. In the British Empire, however, legislative business being so vast and complicated, a second Chamber will always be necessary for revising,—also for acting, with respect to certain measures, in a limited degree, as a Chamber of first instance. It is desirable that this second Chamber, not being, indeed, the real seat of power, but nevertheless having great work to do, should possess every accessary that will give weight to the Chamber, and deepen the sense of responsibility on the part of its members.

By a social accident Great Britain possesses a second Chamber ready made, which, with many imperfections, certainly has great weight in the country; and I believe I express the views of Canadians generally in saying that they appreciate the historical and actual public position and training of the Lords, and the capabilities of the House of Lords as a good Chamber of revision, compared with any other second Chamber in existence.

The deliberate decision, then, of the people of Canada in favour of monarchical principle, and of a stable, strong, and vigorous central Government, also their recognition of the value of such a second Chamber as England herself would approve—go far, I must think, at the outset, to recommend the Canadian constitution to favourable consideration in England. You will be still more disposed to view it with favour when I state two other facts, namely, that the Judges are appointed by the Crown, and that public opinion is strongly against manhood suffrage as it exists in the United States. I altogether misread the signs of the times in England, if the wide extension in Canada of self-government for provinces and localities, is not also an additional circumstance that will be regarded favourably in England.

Judges in Canada.

Upon the whole, then, in a number of essential particulars, as regards both principles and practice, the political system approved by England for Canada closely resembles that of England, and the independent progress of events in England is likely to add to the particulars in which this resemblance is found. I think that the Canadian political system will recommend itself to your minds the more its principles are tudied and its working understood; particularly now, since, as just said, the exigencies of the times, and the whole course of legislation in this country, are tending to produce a state of matters favourable to the adoption and working of some such system.

One of the happiest facts which in this explanation I am privileged to recall to your minds is that this Constitution of the Dominion of Canada was framed entirely by your Canadian fellow-subjects through their statesmen, and it was adopted by the Crown almost in its original form. It is a conspicuous monument of loyalty and good sense. There is something instructive and interesting in the practical, successful application in Canada of our own political principles, and in the exhibition in Canada of results which England appears to be prepared to work out for herself, even without the remarkable example and stimulus which the Dominion of Canada affords.

There is a large difference, however, it may be said, between theory and practice, and it is therefore necessary to speak here of the actual working of the machinery brought into play by the formation of the Dominion.

Practical working of Canadian Constitution.

To say that no difficult questions have arisen in the division of legislative powers between the general and local Parliaments would be to say that Canada is Utopia. The business of government and legislation is beset with difficulties in all countries, but the machinery has worked smoothly and well in Canada, on the whole. Danger has been averted by the good sense of the people in adhering to the real meaning and intent of their Constitution, and in favouring consultation on undetermined points between the Dominion and provincial authorities, before they were committed to debateable exercises of authority. In times which have not been without domestic and foreign difficulties, the general government of Canada has proved strong enough for all purposes. In no particular has its efficacy been more marked than in

its thorough fulfilment of international obligations—for instance, to the United States and to Spain—and in the gathering and equipment of troops for manœuvres and expeditions.

As regards the supply of competent politicians, the supply has been quite equal to the demand. In the Canadian provinces, as in England, many of the ablest men are not prominent, either by political position or by political activity. But the average ability and business power of the Canadian House of Commons is equal to that of any representative assembly in the world, and there is not a provincial assembly in the Dominion which does not contain material to make ministries fully equal to the work before them. In short, I repeat that, under the Canadian system, while the Crown and other institutions dear to us are strengthened and preserved, it is shown to be possible to have complete efficient control over all local affairs, and yet have a central authority strong enough for the common welfare and defence.

As far, then, as the general principles of the Canadian constitution are concerned, they are simply our own principles, and we may therefore hope for a favourable consideration of it, unless insuperable difficulties of detail are found in applying the system to England. I know that in this old nation the ploughshare of progress must meet with deep roots that perhaps cannot be removed. There are a thousand obstacles, some of which are visible, and others that are unseen and at present unknown. I am not, however, one who takes "omne ignotum" as "pro periculoso," but I am rather disposed to view "omne ignotum" as a fresh subject on which, as intellectual, moral, and responsible men, to exercise when decision is needed, the best and highest faculties with which we are gifted.

Do not fear the unknown.

I have seen the system which I recommend transforming, as if by a stroke, discordant communities into what promises to be a great and free nation. These communities, namely, the former North American Colonies, now the Dominion of Canada, were more separated than England, Ireland, and Scotland are, by race, religion, language, and geographical position. Why then, through similar instrumentality, may we not hope for a solution of some of these wide-reaching questions of political organisation which engage attention in this country?

Into the multitude of details involved in my proposal I have already said that I do not on this occasion propose to enter. These, as also already said, will require separate treatment, almost one by one. I may, however, say that several obstacles to union, that were very formidable in the case of Scotland do not exist in the case of Canada. There is the obstacle of greater distance, but that, I have shown you, has become more imaginary than real.

Canada has no history separate from that of England. There are no questions of succession to the Crown, or questions of church government, at least, on that side of the Atlantic, to be settled. Commercial jealousies scarcely exist between the two countries.

In fact, delicate and important as the questions would be that would arise in discussing union with Canada, they would be details; they

would be of the same class as those which the English Commissioners, in the case of Scotland, classed as details.

Of course, there are innumerable other bearings of this proposal of union, innumerable points on which information will be desired by those who have not studied the subject, but the natural limits of this present address quite forbid my entering on them. They will all be dealt with in the proper order and at the proper time, either by myself or by others who are acting with me in this matter. When you study the proposal, perhaps an apparent intricacy in the requirements and arrangements may be an objection. No real intricacy exists in Canada, and fear on this head need not be entertained; any such objection will vanish from the appreciation of those who understand the working of the Canadian constitution, and who at the same time appreciate the good sense which our people bring to bear on such matters. The Englishman insists upon what prescription or law gives him, but scrupulously abstains from touching what is by law or prescription reserved for special classes, orders, or political bodies. I have seen lately, on the union of a colony with Canada, how readily the people at once recognised the new order of things, and smoothed the way instinctively, as it were, for the new machinery, both provincial and dominional. It is precisely in intricate appointments and arrangements of power and political action that the best qualities of our race are seen.

Well, then, having placed before you the great leading considerations which affect this proposal, having given a very succinct, but, I hope, clear account of the Canadian constitution, and stated my adhesion to certain principles as regards the adjustment of fiscal matters between the two countries, I invite you to survey the picture of a *vastly extensive empire which is to be ours*, becoming gradually more consolidated as one mighty whole.

The Empire of the future.

I have limited my proposal to Canada, because I know what the younger political men of Canada think of it, and because I can see through this proposal, and can advocate its principles and details as a practical politician. But the future is before us, and as time passes, as the people of England become better educated and less provincial and insular in their ideas and feelings, views similar, at least in a large degree, to those which I have expressed must, I think, at last prevail, and be followed by corresponding political measures. As Canada fills up, and our other colonies fill up with population, and increase in wealth and importance, and as our communications with them are improved, so proportionally would the weight of the empire be felt throughout the world. I may very satisfactorily appeal to the use England has made of her power and influence during the last half-century, as an indication of what we might expect from the more direct influence of her councils and her decisions over an area of the world's surface, inhabited by probably more than one-fifth part of the whole human race. Surely her supremacy would be for peace, at least as far as her own dominions extended, and even as regards the other

nations, her moral influences so backed would acquire additional preponderance.

Look onward and upward.

I look especially to views and objects that are in strict harmony with our better and more elevated aspirations and motives. Surely we value an increased means of making known our faith, our principles, our knowledge, our civilisation, of teaching others to know them, and in their turn spread them wider and wider. Surely, even in this world, there is something worth esteeming and seeking for, besides wealth and power.

I trust I am addressing Englishmen and Englishwomen, to whom these ideas will not appear visionary or overstrained. My appeal is to motives and sensibilities that our own knowledge of human nature, and the positive action of whole nations of men prove to us to be powerful and efficient. Modern examples, as well as ancient communities, read us the same lesson. Have we not of late seen the speaking of the same tongue form a large item in the statements and claims heralding important Continental changes? The very spread of our own language, and its real adoption and usage, would in the course of time have far greater effect than at first sight might strike those whose thoughts have not been specially directed to such matters.

The prevailing use of a language not only has its commercial effects, but in its own silent, unobtrusive, but penetrative way, influences the perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and grasp of those who use it. I speak, perhaps, more of the educated and influential classes. Our own language is a thoroughly good representative of ourselves; indeed, the language of most nations is more or less a faithful representative of them. Language itself is not only a development, but when developed forms a not unimportant element in the shaping of national character.

I will now, in approaching the conclusion of this address, refer to a point already noticed, and which, until duly examined, has probably to contend with vaguely adverse ideas in many minds. I mean the *effect of my proposal on the dignity and influence of the British Crown and Executive.*

British Crown and Executive again referred to.

If we compare even the present exalted position of the Sovereign and Crown of England with that which would be occupied in the case of a more extended incorporation of British territories, the largest admirer of royalty and monarchical splendour will have good grounds for being satisfied with a position such as would then be displayed. But, before naming that position, I would observe that this would be an unfair comparison, inasmuch as at present the English Crown concentrates a very large degree of dignity and splendour from its sovereignty over our great colonies and dependencies. If, however, the views and expectations of some political men are well founded, this sovereignty must eventually witness colony after colony, quietly, I hope, and peacefully, if it must be so, emerging into new conditions of natural existence apart from us. The real comparison, then is, between the aspect of the Crown, as under my proposal it would be placed, and that which it

would occupy in case of almost relapse into isolated and self-supporting dignity and power such as would accrue in the event stated. Be it recollected that the lapse of time, we must fairly reckon, will see Canada and many of these colonies far more populous, wealthy, and important than they are now.

I must think the position of the English Crown most dignified as the acknowledged head and Imperial ruler of such an assemblage of nations as would then subject their highest and most vital interests to its decisions. Surely, the English Crown, in place of losing, would gain both dignity and power from the intensified bond between England and other portions of the Empire.

Having mentioned the probable future position of the Crown and the central government, let me now refer to the position which would be thus opened up to our *nobility, landed gentry, and wealthy, influential classes generally.*

Effect of adoption of my proposal on the influential classes generally.

They have, indeed, in England occupied a proud position. In no country in the world, probably, has a more general and marked respect and deference been maintained, and so long maintained by the people generally towards their nobility and social superiors.

The duties of these social superiors, like their position, have accordingly been special. They have inherited not only social dignity, but also social obligations. They have inherited also, as a rule, an access to all our great offices of state, our highest appointments, where one man's action tells so widely for good or for evil, for happiness or for misery, and no slight share of the feelings of our people generally towards the upper classes, as upper classes, is due to the splendid services in every department of life rendered by eminent men of rank and station. Indeed, in these days, we may almost say, without disrespect, that such members of their class largely float the class itself.

Now, what must we expect, as regards the above, from the adoption of my proposal? The answer, I think, is very obvious.

The nobility, gentry, and wealthy influential classes generally, would fully share the increased dignity and influence which I have shown would accrue to the Crown.

The avenues to high station and authority would be both widened and lengthened, and each step would lead to proportionally increased esteem and dignity. The opportunities for usefulness would be more numerous, and the objects of much of that usefulness on a grander scale. Many men would then be almost compelled to occupy leading political positions in the country, where only perhaps one now finds an opening for his exertions. In place of regulating small municipal affairs, as is frequently the case now, the members of the two great houses of the *British Imperial Parliament* would deal with matters of the most exalted concern, and would have an opportunity of giving sufficient time and attention to them.

The future Imperial Parliament.

They would have authority over matters that concerned the whole people, the peace, order, and good government of the Empire. They would have to do with everything that was not expressly placed under

the control of the local authorities of the several provinces. The particular matters under the control of the *Imperial Parliament* would be the *Public Debt and Property, Trade and Commerce, Army, Navy, and Militia, Post-Office Service, Census, Navigation, Currency and Coinage, Criminal Law and Procedure, Penitentiaries, and so forth.* There is no reason why the Imperial Parliament should be more numerous than it is at present.

I will even venture to speak of the then personal experience of the upper classes generally. I do not deny—indeed I recognise the fact—that the habit of dealing with large matters, if that dealing is good, does of itself greatly tend to educate and train a man. There are, we know, many men who, raised to power, have proved their greatness and fitness for power, though they themselves have moved only in less prominent, perhaps even in humble positions. These cases, it is true, are somewhat exceptional; but, as a general rule, we may safely say that dealing with great matters and with great masses almost necessarily draws out great principles, and forces their recognition and due appreciation. I think any experienced man will agree with me.

The then increased magnitude of the various objects of concern to be submitted to the care and direction of our leading men, or rather, perhaps, the increased responsibility arising from increased opportunities of dealing with those matters, would tell well on the men themselves, and they would feel and know it to be so.

Their extended usefulness and opportunities of good in all ways might afford acceptable reflection to the heart also, as well as to the head.

Even those members of the more influential classes, not occupying official or public positions, would share the acceptable increase of the honourable estimate of their order generally. Considering the sentiments we sometimes hear respecting our highly privileged classes in this country, increased utility would be anything but undesirable for these classes.

As regards the *politicians and officials who would be mainly concerned with the working of the local political machinery*, surely the proposed increase of direct dealing in local legislatures with persons and property would greatly tend to give an increased interest for localities and their inhabitants. It would be practically teaching an answer to the question, "And who is my neighbour?"—a question in which there is very much. In proportion to the extension of my proposal would be the hope of even more gratifying results—a more widely-spread recognition of who is a neighbour.

It is true that a member of a provincial, as compared with the Imperial Parliament—a member, that is to say, of a Scottish, Irish, or Canadian parliament—would not be thereby in so commanding and conspicuous a position as that of a member of the British Imperial Parliament. We must, however, bear in mind that these provincial legislatures, as at present in the dominion of Canada, would control and decide very important matters. They would be *great legislative*

The future Provincial Parliaments.

assemblies, and not mere large vestries. The dimensions of their power would not be Imperial, but assuredly these dimensions would be anything but insignificant or unimportant. The legislation of the provincial parliaments would directly affect the happiness and every-day interests of very large numbers of men. That seats in the provincial parliaments would be greatly sought by the ablest and highest in the land, and often in preference to seats in the Imperial Parliament, I do not doubt. At the same time the candidates would include men of more various classes and occupations than can now offer themselves for the Parliament at Westminster, and a very important result would follow, namely, that the sphere of the Executive might be beneficially enlarged, in some respects, as the provincial parliaments would be truly representative assemblies.

The subjects with which the *provincial parliaments* would have power to deal would be matters of a local or private nature in the provinces, or such as affected the interests of the provinces apart from the general interests of the empire. The matters submitted to their care and decision exclusively (subject, of course, to a veto from the Lieutenant-Governor) would be *amendments in the constitution of the provinces;* for instance, Scotland would decide whether she would have one or two legislative chambers, or five or ten provincial ministers of the Crown, or whether members could sit in both the provincial and Imperial parliaments. The provinces themselves also would deal with *education, property, and civil rights; administration of justice; money affairs and taxation concerning objects within the provinces; local public works, prisons, hospitals, and asylums; together with many similar and weighty concerns.*

Effect of adoption of my proposal on the people generally.

As regards our people generally, a general interest in actual public affairs would be maintained among all classes, if my proposals were adopted, and all would more clearly see that they had common interests. It is certainly desirable that this feeling should be maintained. Much useful and valuable talent at present smoulders away unemployed.

The decay and partial absence of concern for everything out of the private circle of life is a regrettable feature in this country. I cannot see how it can be otherwise as things now are. In the present British Parliament we see results, springing from the same class of feelings, at work in respect to certain very important fields of action. I allude to the comparative, or rather absolute, perhaps I might say wicked apathy, with which matters not English (say, matters colonial), matters not English, not colonial, Indian for instance—the comparative apathy, I say, with which these matters are treated. The relief of Parliament from matters proper for consideration in provincial parliaments would point considerably to improvement in this respect. More sufficient time for, more continued habit of, considering Imperial interests, would act well.

A further benefit would probably follow from a more general interest in public affairs on the part of the public generally, and should it follow, great good would be effected; it would be an important result of my

proposal. I should be sorry to see men unduly heated upon politics—knowing more of other people's business than their own. I do not advocate such an ascendency of public matters, but assuredly we *know too little of other countries whose fortune and condition directly affect us.* It is the poor who suffer most from mistakes in foreign policy, and unfortunately they have not leisure to master difficult questions that arise with other countries. If facts on each side were known and fairly appreciated, how greatly would dangerous international quarrels often be lessened; how favourably would international depreciation often be toned down! Now, more concern than at present exists amongst our intelligent classes might be expected to lead to a better information on our foreign relations. The mass of the people would become tinged with the sentiments of those better informed than themselves, particularly during times of national excitement; and even this knowledge, supported by the ample justice which ever is in the minds of the people, would be truly valuable in mitigating international exasperation.

We may also, I think, say that in a certain degree our people here, like their fellow-subjects and relations in Canada, would learn, both from the circumstance of nearer and more important connection, as well as from the example of others, gradually to feel increased interest and proportionate pleasure in matters and persons generally now almost foreign to them, and to share also the humanising effects which I have shadowed forth, and which even the most influential classes in the land would not disdain to acknowledge.

Conclusion

So much, then, as to the probable effect of the adoption of my proposals upon the *Crown, upon the more influential classes, and upon political feelings and interests generally in the nation.*

In conclusion, I repeat to you that my object in addressing you is to promote and urge the acceptance of the proposal of an incorporating union with Canada, by truthful advocacy and fair recognition and appreciation of absolutely existing conditions, both of facts, and of feelings and opinions. As regards the realisation of the benefits I have held forth, the intelligent and considerate hearer will judge for himself, and I think his verdict will go with me. I hope that the subject will receive judicious, unprejudiced hearing on the part of the nation, and be treated with temperate, sound advocacy on the part of its promoters. I respectfully commend the whole subject to your consideration.

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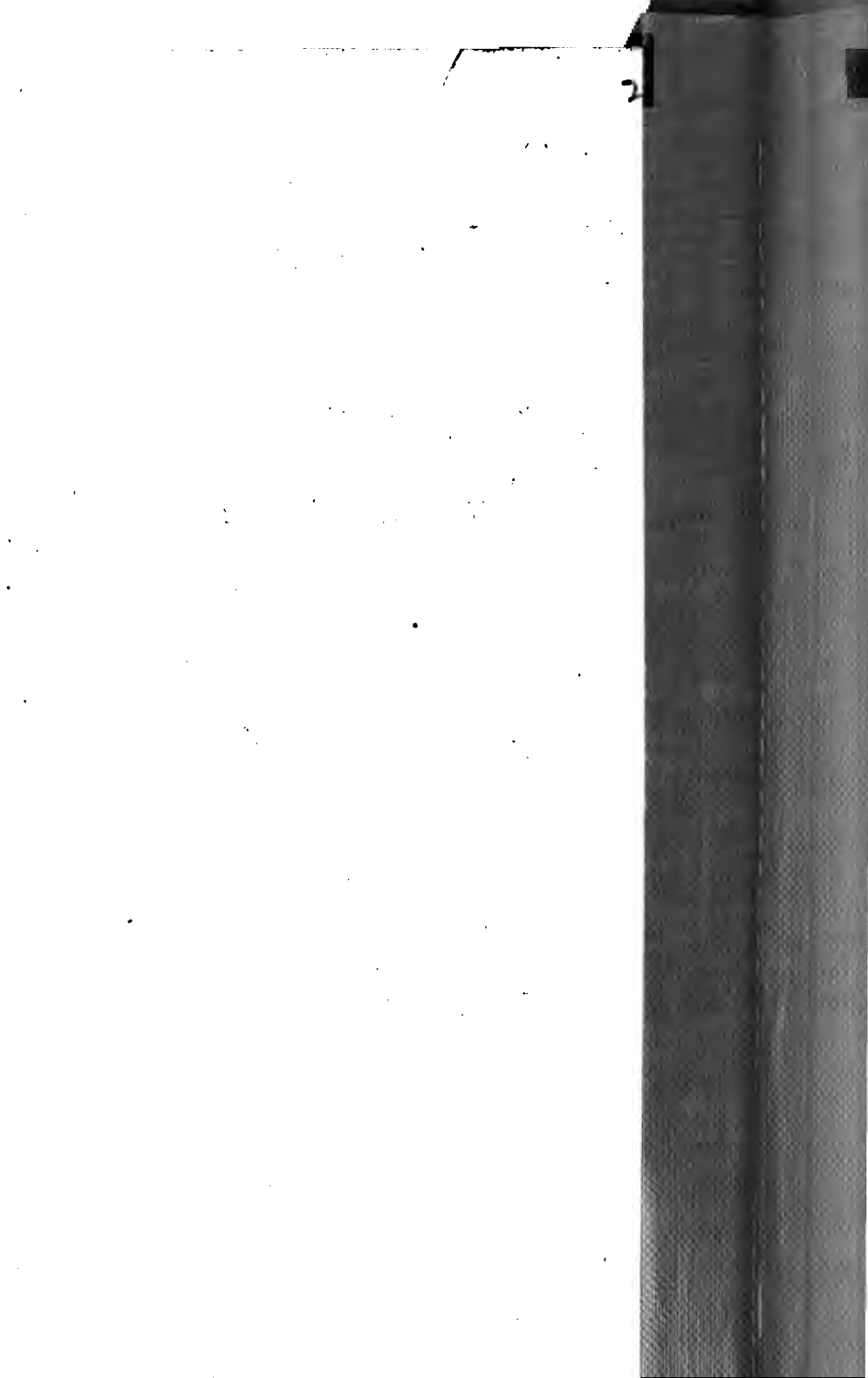

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